Panel of traffic assistants

1642. MISS FRIDA TOPNO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a panel for the post of Traffic Assistant in Indian Airlines was formed during 1997 under the special recruitment drive for the Scheduled Caste candidates only;

(b) if so, the number of persons included in the panel together with number of persons who have been given appointments; and

(c) by when, the remaining candidates are likely to be given appointments?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) One Scheduled Caste internal candidate was placed on the panel formed on 30th April, 1997. However, no appointment could be made .from this panel due to non-availability of vacancy on or after 30th April, 1997.

The above panel expired on 29th April, 1999.

Anti-dumping regulations

1643. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the outcome of the Doha Ministerial Conference of WTO with particular reference to Anti-dumping regulations;

(b) whether it has been defined in the WTO Agreement in the Doha conference; and

(c) if so, whether it has taken public interest into consideration within a broad framework of WTO?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) to (c) At the Fourth Ministerial Conference of WTO held at Doha it was *inter-alia* agreed to have negotiations aimed at clarifying and improving disciplines under the Anti-dumping Agreement while

preserving the basic concepts, principles and effectiveness of the Agreement and its instruments and objectives. The negotiations are also to take into account the needs of developing and least developed participants.

Problems faced by Plantation Sector

1644. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: SHRI
V.V. RAGHAVAN:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the deep crisis in the tea plantation sector affecting the planters, small farmers as well as the labour; and

(b) if so, the.details thereof and what steps are being taken by Government to solve the problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government is aware of the problems being faced by the tea plantation sector in the country due to the low prices of tea both in North and South India. The reasons for low price are mainly attributed to low demand from domestic and export sectors, quality of tea produced particularly teas produced in bought leaf factories and increasing availability of low priced tea in the international market.

In order to give relief to the tea growers of the country the Government has taken the following steps:

* The allowance under the Section 33 AB of Income Tax Act has been increased from 20% to 40%.

* Excise duty on tea has been reduced from Rs.2 per Kg. to Rs. 1 per Kg. in the Budget 2002-03.

* A factory upgradation Scheme has been introdcued by the Tea Board to encourage production of good quality orthodox and non reconditional CTC teas in the country.